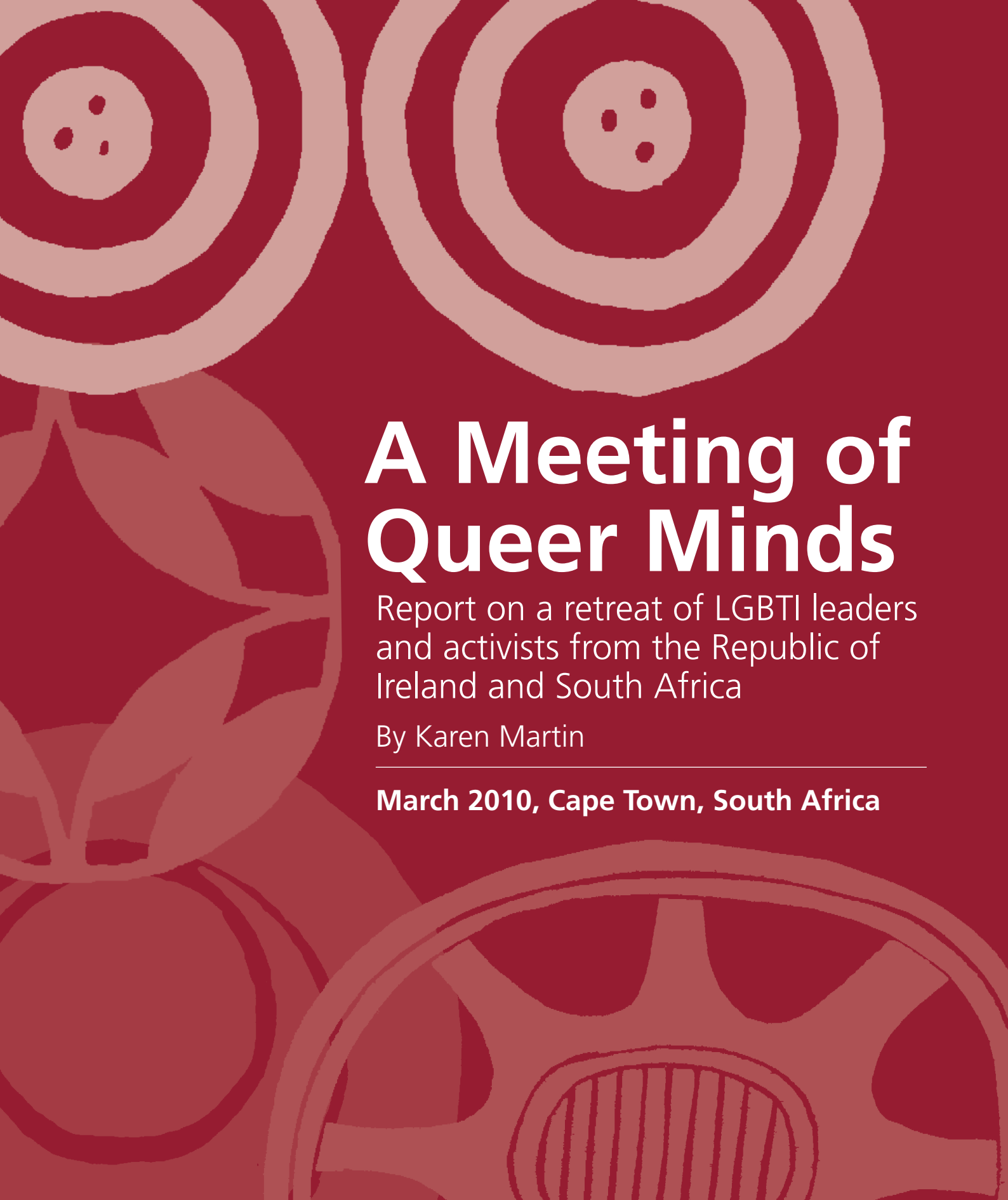

A Meeting of Queer Minds

Report on a retreat of LGBTI leaders and activists from the Republic of Ireland and South Africa

By Karen Martin

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CONTENTS

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Sue Valentine was an excellent facilitator

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INTRODUCTION

In March 2010, The Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) hosted an exchange between leadership and activists from Irish and South African organisations representing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (LGBTIs) at Hout Bay near Cape Town in South Africa.

Since 2001 , AP has been a major supporter of LGBTI organisations in both the Republic of Ireland and South Africa, following a strategic scoping exercise that identified the need to promote and support full citizenship for LGBTIs in both countries. The exercise found that LGBTI communities were politically marginal in terms of access to human and socio-economic rights.

In both countries, AP support built upon political and economic conditions that favoured reform. In South Africa, there was the transition from apartheid to democracy, starting in 1994, with a new Constitution guaranteeing equality before the law for all marginalised groups, including LGBTIs. In the Republic of Ireland, sustained economic growth in the early 1990s was accompanied by political liberalisation and changing social attitudes, including the decriminalisation of homosexuality.

At the retreat in Cape Town, South African and Irish LGBTI activists were given an opportunity to reflect on LGBTI activism in the two countries over the last 15 years:

- What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies pursued?
- What has been achieved?
- What are the challenges that remain?

The discussions were not intended as a status report on both countries, nor a comprehensive analysis of strategy or progress to date. The retreat was more a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas and provoke discussion, rather than to draw any firm conclusions about future directions or priorities.

"In South Africa, there was the transition from apartheid to democracy, starting in 1994, with a new Constitution guaranteeing equality before the law for all marginalised groups, including LGBTIs."

STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

This report on the retreat is structured in the following way:

The **Synthesis Report** draws out the key findings, conclusions and recommendations arising from the discussion and debate over the two days of the retreat. It is a stand-alone document for those who do not have the time to read the entire report.

Part 1 provides a history and background to LGBTI activism in the Republic of Ireland, including an overview of the issues facing the community today.

Part 2 does the same for South Africa.

Those not familiar with conditions in either country are encouraged to read parts 1 and 2, but this is not essential.

Part 3 is a detailed record of the discussions that took place at the retreat. It is the core of the report and is rich with information and insights that we hope will inform discussion and debate in other countries and settings. Many of the observations about engaging in advocacy and building coalitions apply to other human rights struggles, not only those of LGBTIs.

Part 4 is a conclusion summarising key learning and making recommendations for future exchanges between LGBTIs in the two countries.

The organisers hope that the report serves as a resource for organisations and groups thinking through strategies for social justice.

We have also provided a **list of participants** and their contact details and a **glossary of terms.**

"The Synthesis Report draws out the key findings, conclusions and recommendations arising from the discussion and debate over the two days of the retreat."

SYNTHESIS REPORT

Community development and cohesion

What do we mean when we talk about the LGBTI community? Is there such a thing as an LGBTI community? Or are there simply disparate organisations representing sectional interests? Who is visible in this community? Who gets the resources? Which voices tend to be heard?

At the retreat, activists tried to unpack these concepts. There was a general recognition that race, gender, ethnicity and economic status are important social forces in the LGBTI sector, as they are in society. These impact on cohesion. So do imposed discourses around the gender binary of male and female, which tend not to be challenged in the community, particularly in relation to the status of transgender and intersex people. "Are we doing enough to overcome these fault-lines in building our community?" activists asked.

At the same time, from an organisational point of view, individuals often engage in LGBTI activism for a short time or erratically. This compromises the community. Continuity is important for building new leadership and activists and for maintaining institutional memory to inform new campaigns.

There are also unspoken issues in the community that are not being addressed, such as domestic violence in LGBTI relationships, substance abuse, the lack of visibility of transgender and gender issues, the neglect of the needs of older LGBTIs and a lack of organising among young people.

Regarding young people, developing the next generation of leaders is an important element in the sustainability of the community. Do LGBTI organisations have a sufficient understanding of the issues facing the LGBTI youth?

LGBTI activism and community work happen mainly in the cities in both the Republic of Ireland and South Africa.

> "Participants at the retreat agreed strongly that in advocating for the full citizenship of LGBTIs the community should not promote the notion of special rights for LGBTIs."

Rural areas tend to be ignored or under-resourced. How can strategies be adapted to better access rural areas?

Activists went on from examining notions of community and their shortcomings to looking at LGBTIs as citizens within a human rights framework.

Advocacy and citizenship

Activists work in differing contexts in the two countries. The Irish Republic achieved separation from the UK following various struggles, including the rebellion in 1916 and culminating in the formal declaration of the republic in 1948. The Irish Constitution of 1937, while informed by republican values, is also significantly informed by Christian norms. Within that, heterosexual marriage and the traditional family are seen as the primary building blocks of society.

The period of 1993 to 2007 saw far-reaching equality legislation and a significant degree of liberalisation in the Republic of Ireland. The economic boom at this time contributed to this liberalisation. This period opened space for a discussion about what it means to be an Irish citizen in the context of the country's growing diversity. There is some concern that the economic crisis that emerged in 2008 could undermine some of the openness around diversity and what it means to be Irish.

South Africa's advent to democracy in1994, by contrast, was characterised by the adoption of a Constitution that seeks to entrench a raft of human and socio-economic rights and promotes an inclusive citizenship, although enduring poverty and inequality are a challenge to these.

Participants at the retreat agreed strongly that in advocating for the full citizenship of LGBTIs the community should not promote the notion of special rights for LGBTIs. Struggles for the human rights of LGBTIs should be located in the broader struggle for human rights behind the banner that human rights are indivisible and all citizens are equal.

These principles should inform how LGBTI activists engage with the state, form alliances with other struggles and work in communities.

Activism needs to be multifaceted:

- strengthening individual LGBTI organisations
- working with the state to change discriminatory policies and laws
- changing public attitudes, especially among young people
- linking up with other struggles for human rights.

Ongoing struggles

While over the last 15 years LGBTIs have achieved much in South Africa and the Republic of Ireland in terms of legislative reform, much still needs to be done.

At the time of writing, the Irish government remains equivocal about allowing civil marriage for same-sex couples, stating that this would require a constitutional referendum[1]. In South Africa and Ireland, there are still legal obstacles preventing transgender and intersex people from changing their assigned gender identities. In both countries, there are deficits in terms of the legal recognition of LGBTI families. Similarly, while persecution on the grounds of sexual orientation is recognised in both countries as grounds for asylum, there are no dedicated service provisions for LGBTI refugees. "Corrective rape" of lesbians remains a problem in South Africa, which has no legislation to deal with hate crimes.

Activists agreed that official monitoring and watchdog bodies need to be strengthened to take up some of these issues. In this regard, the example of Sweden, which has a dedicated ombudsman to monitor the implementation of legislation for LGBTI rights, was mentioned.

Religion is an extremely powerful force in the Republic of Ireland. A conservative Catholic ethos still has significant impact, particularly in education and healthcare. In addition, both Christian and Muslim religious groups, espouse and provide reparative therapy for LGBTIs. In South Africa, in general, progressive churches seem to have been displaced by evangelical fundamentalism in terms of influencing centres of power.

Organised religion is at the heart of LGBTI oppression and needs

to be deconstructed. This poses particular challenges for LGBTI organisations. How can one deconstruct an institution that provides hope and comfort to millions of desperate people? In Africa, the devastation of HIV/AIDS has led many people to US-based fundamentalist churches for guidance, support and solace. Also, the church deflects awareness and criticism of the failures of the state.

An engagement needs to come from groups within the churches. They need capacity-building and support. There are also smaller churches and breakaway churches from the large institutional churches. LGBTI organisations need to appropriate Christian values for a progressive rights agenda.

Mainstreaming, normalising and coalition-building

Human rights struggles, whether they are around racism, the recognition of disability or the citizenship status of refugees and migrants, are currently happening in silos, which has the effect of pushing them to the margins.

In South Africa, LGBTI activists find themselves drawn into broader struggles (access to housing, healthcare and employment) because of the pervasiveness of poverty and inequality. In this way, LGBTI organisations have developed connections with grassroots communities in some places, though insufficiently, and have been visible as LGBTIs in community struggles, leading to broader community solidarity with LGBTIs. Similarly in the Republic of Ireland, LGBTI organisations work with other organisations in the human rights sector to promote legislation around equity for vulnerable groups.

These examples point to the possibility that LGBTIs can make common cause with other vulnerable groups and can be present and supportive to other civil society organisations. At the same time, when LGBTIs are active in other struggles they often do not “come out” and opportunities are lost to build support for LGBTIs.

Alliances and coalitions between LGBTI organisations

However, it was agreed that before looking at how LGBTIs might build alliances with other sectors, LGBTI organisations need first to take a critical look at the lack of cohesion in the organised LGBTI community. This is standing in the way of more effective activism for LGBTIs and undermining providing a strong platform from which to engage effectively with others.

Divisions along lines of race, gender and class are inherent in single issue causes, but in the LGBTI community the lack of visibility of and support for transgender and intersex people are also problems. There are almost certainly also ideological differences within LGBTI organisations and the alliances of which they are part. Different LGBTI organisations have different priorities. These need to negotiated and balanced in LGBTI alliances and coalitions. Power imbalances and "turf wars" can drive the priorities that alliances choose. All of these factors need to be identified, recognised, interrogated and "owned".

Some key issues arose in relation to alliance and coalition-building:

- In negotiating difference, honesty and frankness by the players is essential. This requires a degree of organisational maturity and trust that may presently be lacking and can only be built over time.
- In surfacing and acknowledging differences, power imbalances and different visibilities, organisations can identify common ground — what unites and what divides. The most effective coalitions are those around issues of common cause. Too often, organisations join in broad alliances only to have their effectiveness compromised by unidentified internal fissures.
- Coalitions have value in presenting a united front on a particular issue, but there is no need for a united front on all issues. Different organisations need to retain their specific interests and character as well as take advantage of a collective space.

In both South Africa and the Republic of Ireland, LGTBI organisations are loosely allied in Joint Working Groups (JWG) and some of the above learning is drawn from the on-the-ground experience of working together.

The South African JWG, which has diverse affiliates, agreed to a strategy of working together on one mutually agreed campaign each year as a way of building confidence and trust and interrogating the dynamics of coalition-building. The campaign for the recognition of same-sex marriages proved to be a broadly unifying cause, to which most affiliates could sign up.

Finally, coalition-building requires resources, and limited resources will necessarily limit the possibilities for working together.

Alliances and coalitions between LGBTI organisations and other human rights struggles

The reality of alliances and coalition-building with other human rights struggles is that LGBTI organisations are immediately confronted with overt or implicit homophobia. Many supposedly progressive organisations and potential allies simply pay lip-service to LGBTI equality. This is often the case in South Africa. In the Republic of Ireland, some civil society organisations are dominated by a religious perspective which, while tolerant, is essentially unaccepting of homosexuality. Many others, such as trade unions and human rights associations, have long been allies for LGBTI rights.

It is easier to form alliances with others struggles where there is a degree of convergence around issues that also affect LGBTIs. One example is the movement around HIV/AIDS, which affects heterosexuals and homosexuals. Another is the issue of violence against women, which affects heterosexual women and lesbians. However, sometimes the leadership of these mainstream movements are averse to highlighting how these issues impact on LGBTIs for fear of diverting attention from the broader cause.

In forming alliances with others, LGBTI organisations need to work on combating stereotypes, for example that LGBTIs are a privileged grouping, whose needs and rights have been met, and who are overly interested in sex, and so on.

Activists in the Republic of Ireland have found that bilateral alliances around single issues are easier to put together, more easily managed and more effective than multilateral coalitions.

One way of moving other human rights organisations towards taking up LGBTI rights is to form LGBTI chapters and interest groups in established institutions and organisations, such as trade unions, political parties, social movements, professional associations and so on.

Another way is for LGBTI organisations themselves to initiate campaigns that have broader resonance and can attract allies. For example, a campaign against hate crimes and for the introduction of legislation to penalise hate crimes might include ethnic, religious and racial minorities, refugees, migrants, women, LGBTIs and travellers, all of whom experience hostility.

International solidarity

How can Irish and South African LGBTI organisations provide solidarity and support to LGBTIs in more repressive settings, particularly in Africa, where homophobia is sweeping the continent, often supported by evangelist and Christian fundamentalist organisations in the US? As a consequence of the increasing homophobia, homosexuality has been criminalised in several African countries, LGBTI organisations driven underground and activists attacked or murdered.

Clearly, there is a responsibility for LGBTI organisations in democracies such as the Republic of Ireland and South Africa to support their counterparts. However such solidarity needs to be informed by certain values. In post-colonial Africa, social and political systems are part of a global system. North-South differences, alliances and power dynamics need always to be taken into account between LGBTI organisations from the North and from the South, and between Northern funders and their Southern grantees.

What does solidarity mean in this context?

- Solidarity should not be paternalistic: it must happen as a product of genuine dialogue between Northern LGBTI organisations and their counterparts in the South, in which the agenda is driven by the South.

- Northern organisations need to be careful not to be seen to be taking over an agenda or subsuming the dialogue between Southern organisations.
- International partners can cause damage if they do not understand the local context.
- Solidarity is best built over time and through doing (programmatically).
- There must be a genuine and agreed desire to work together: it cannot be imposed.

Given South Africa's position as the economic powerhouse of Africa and its prominence on the international stage, South African LGBTI organisations need to take these principles into account as well, and avoid dictating to or dominating the agendas of neighbouring countries.

LGBTI organisations, North and South, underestimate grassroots capacity to organise. The very presence of grassroots LGBTI organisations in Africa is testimony to their resistance, their organisation, and their resilience. People at the grassroots have an acute political understanding of LGBTI issues. Established LGBTI organisations in South Africa and in the North should be prepared to stand back and allow the growth of local organising. LGBTI organisations in South Africa and the North should be asking people on the ground what they want in terms of solidarity.

At present, solidarity campaigns tend to happen around a crisis (for example the Buhati Bill in Uganda). There is no carefully considered, explicitly articulated strategy on the part of South African and Northern LGBTI organisations for ongoing support.

LGBTI organisations need a strategy for solidarity as a process rather than as an event. Relationships need to be built and sustained between organisations, not between individuals, and over time. Individuals influence organisational solidarity, which then becomes vulnerable when relationships between individuals change.

Sustainability and enduring capacity

With AP's planned exit from the LGBTI sector and proposed closure in 2016, LGBTI grantees are concerned about securing the longer term sustainability of their sectors.

In Ireland, there is little history of private philanthropy. In South Africa, there is more, but very little directed to LGBTIs. In both countries, the sectors face the challenge of broadening their resource bases.

This includes proposals to set up a dedicated LGBTI community foundation in each country based on individual and corporate giving. Some preparatory work has already been done in South Africa, including feasibility studies into individual and corporate giving, which is available to our Irish colleagues and others.

In moving to a community foundation model of funding, several questions present themselves:

- How do organisations access a variety of local funding?
- How can LGBTI organisations engage wealthy LGBTI individuals?
- How can LGBTI-based businesses be contracted into community development? The role of for-profit organisations needs to be explored. There are business opportunities in the LBGTI sector, but LGBTI businesses (such as clubs and bars) tend to extract wealth without building the LGBTI community.

Fundraising requires professional skills, including understanding the sources of funding and shaping messages to reach those sources. Generally, LGBTI organisations do not have these skills. This gap needs to be filled.

The state needs to play its role in sustaining the LGBTI community. Currently, LGBTI organisations provide dedicated services which ought to be the state's responsibility. In both South Africa and the Republic of Ireland, state funding for LGBTI service organisations is very limited at present.

LGBTI activists need to be able to demonstrate to state agencies that it is more cost-effective to either provide dedicated services to the LGBTI community or contract LGBTI organisations to provide these services than to deal with the consequences of not addressing LGBT health issues (such as HIV/AIDS).

Services

A key challenge facing the LGBTI movement in both South Africa and the Republic of Ireland is to persuade the state that LGBTIs have specific health and other service needs. These services are currently being provided by LGBTI organisations, often without government support. Some regard this as a failure by the state to meet its obligations. However, there is also a concern that as recipients of state funding LGBTI service providers would be constrained in criticising or challenging government.

The state's resistance to providing LGBTI services is often due to a lack of awareness about LGBTI issues among government employees. Education and training may be helpful in this regard and LGBTI organisations are well placed to provide this training.

PART 1: THE REPUBLIC OF **IRELAND**

Legislation and policy

Since 1989, there have been very significant legislative reforms for LGBTIs in Ireland, including around the decriminalisation of homosexuality, fair employment practices, equality in service provision, and asylum for LGBTI refugees, among other issues that affect LGBTIs. Civil partnerships legislation is presently before Parliament. Legal and full equality is still needed in the areas of a transgender recognition framework, the recognition and protection of LGBTI families, including adoption, and access to full civil marriage.

The public services need to see it as their duty to engage on LGBTI issues, and LGBTI issues need to be mainstreamed into policies in government, the public service, professional bodies, regulatory bodies and non-governmental organisations (NGO)s.

In an education system dominated by the Catholic church, homophobic bullying, safety, and discrimination by LGBTI teachers are issues. Support services to both pupils and teachers are needed.

HIV/AIDS and sexual health

There is universal access to high quality treatment and care.

Increasingly, political representatives and the executive, representatives from the medical profession, the Department of Health (policy), the Health Services Executive (delivery) and NGOs are engaged at the national level to identify, understand and meet the varied health needs of the LGBTI community. There are also good framework plans, such as the national education and prevention strategy. In 2007, *Stamp Out Stigma,* a campaign against stigma and discrimination, was launched.

In the six months to mid-2009, there was the highest increase ever in new HIV diagnoses for men who have sex with men (MSMs),

"The public services need to see it as their duty to engage on LGBTI issues, and LGBTI issues need to be mainstreamed into policies in government, the public service, professional bodies, regulatory bodies and non-governmental organisations (NGO)s."

and there is a general rise in sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among MSMs. HIV/AIDS is slipping off the political and national policy agenda. It needs to be restored, with the focus on the main at-risk group — MSMs.

People living with HIV/AIDS need support around secondary prevention, stigma and discrimination. Resources are required for implementing education and prevention plans, and new strategies are required to target the most at-risk subgroups. Issues of notification and criminalisation remain unresolved.

Young people

Young people are coming out younger and in greater numbers. They are more likely than rest of the LGBTI community to experience homo/transphobia, including violence. The impacts include a higher tendency to suicide, early school leaving and drug use. Religion continues to influence services to the LGBTI youth, and the education sector is conservative.

LGBTI young people in the asylum system or migrating to Ireland from other countries need attention. Parents of LGBTIs also need more support.

LGBTI youth services have grown significantly, including major public awareness of homosexuality among young people, the inclusion of the LGBTI youth in national strategies on suicide and drugs, the inclusion of education stakeholders, increasing political support, and a clearer and louder LGBTI youth voice.

The work needs to be driven by the real experiences of young people. The sense that "young people never had it so good" needs to be interrogated. LGBTI youth issues need to be mainstreamed while strong positive LGBTI identities are promoted among young people.

Community development

The LGBTI community is strong and visible but financially weak. There are 10 small-staffed LGBTI organisations, and strong support groups within organisations. Significant research is being done.

But stronger structures and networks need to be developed, both within LGBTI organisations and with other agencies. Agreed guidelines on policy, training and models of management are also needed. LGBTI organisations are reliant on volunteers and dependent on government funding. Capacity-building is needed.

Mental health

Stigma, inequality and discrimination lead to minority stress, and minority stress leads to an increased risk of poor mental health, self-harm and suicidal behaviour. Homo/transphobic school environments have been linked with poor mental health outcomes.

Government has a 10-year strategy on suicide prevention, and *Supporting LGBT Lives* is a major, government-funded survey of LGBTI mental health. There are co-branding projects between LGBTI organisations and the health service. *BeLonGTo* is a national youth development programme, and the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN) has a mental health initiative. There is significant engagement by professional and voluntary mental health organisations.

However, the psychiatric model dominates, and mental health services and transgender-competent mental health professionals are lacking, as is awareness of specific LGBTI issues. LGBTIs need support to engage with mainstream services. For young people, these services are mainly lacking. And lesbian and bisexual women have been identified to be at a higher risk and need to be targeted.

Marriage

Currently, there is no constitutional or legal relationship recognition at all for same-sex couples and families[2]. The proposed civil partnership does not provide full equality: the existence of same-sex families with children is ignored, with no rights for same-sex couples with children to be recognised as joint parents, and fewer rights than in marriage. Within the LGBTI community, there are different approaches to achieving marriage equality, but all LGBTI groups are united in that goal.

More generally, the economic crisis is giving rise to conflicting government priorities. A political consensus has emerged among all parties in Parliament that civil marriage would require a constitutional referendum. There is faith-based opposition to marriage, and general homophobia, in particular in relation to same-sex parenting.

Transgender and intersex people

Transgender and intersex people are not explicitly included or protected in equality legislation, although they are protected under the gender ground in the equality legislation. Because there is no legal recognition of gender change, transgender and intersex people are often invisible and denied many rights. Irish law is in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights in relation to the right to respect for family and private life in so far as it denies transgender people the right to change their legal identities. A government commitment to introduce legislation to recognise the acquired gender of transsexual people is needed, with transgender participation and involvement in all gender recognition legislation consultations, policies and decision-making. A puclic consultation is currently taking place on the issue.

Formal healthcare policies, support and services do not exist in the Republic of Ireland to address transgender- or intersex-specific needs.

Young transgender or gender variant people in the education system need support, and unemployment among this group is high.

LGB and T[3] organisations are in the early stages of working together to support and develop a sustainable LGBTI community. Awareness raising, education and training are needed.

Women

There is no legislation for assisted human reproduction for same-sex couples and a lack of support for same-sex headed families

Older lesbians lack support and their invisibility is an issue.

There is a lack of lesbian-specific health information and positive images of lesbian women in healthcare settings, and a refusal to believe that lesbian and bisexual women's issues are different from those of heterosexual women. Organisations are applying for funding to produce information for lesbian and bisexual women in partnership with government agencies.

But more women are coming out. There are established support groups and social events exclusive to lesbian and bisexual women. And lesbian and bisexual women are leaders in the academic and political fields. Young lesbian and bisexual women are perceived to be put off by political activism, however.

L.inC *Mind Yourself* initiative

As part of its ongoing programme of work in the area of lesbian and bisexual women's health, L.inC developed the Mind Yourself initiative in 2010, which focused on areas such as mental health and coming out. In addition to running a series of workshops on health and wellbeing, L.inC developed a range of positive health resources for service users, including Happy Out: The Little Coming Out Handbook. This resource was distributed in Cork by L.inC and includes guidance for women coming out, reassuring facts about sexual orientation and lists of supports and resources to help those negotiating coming out.

Health

Health issues are specific and different for lesbian and bisexual women, gay and bisexual men, and transgender and intersex people.

LGBTIs' experiences and solutions need to be mainstreamed. Appropriate and accessible services need to be developed, with targeted initiatives and further research on sub-groups within the LGBTI population. New research on LGBTI older people is in progress.

The national health service has established a national LGBTI health committee. Its 2009 report identifies key issues and recommendations for mainstreaming. The committee needs to be monitored for delivery.

The various health professions are engaged in addressing LGBTI issues, and the 4 Ps approach is being taken up by professional bodies.

There is a lack of care pathways for transgender people and a lack of transgender expertise in health services.

Some questions from the South Africans

What are the basics of the social, political and economic context that LGBTI organisations are working in?

Ireland has a population of approximately 6 million — 4 million in the republic and 2 million in Northern Ireland. 1.5 million live in Dublin. There is a non-executive president and elections based on proportional representation every five years or so. In the recent past, there have almost always been coalition governments of the centre right, with the Labour Party, at centre left, a coalition partner in some of these governments.

Recent economic growth has been significant and resulted in net immigration to service the economy (10% of the population is not Irish), in contrast to Ireland's previous history of emigration. Positive in this regard is that there is little far right opposition to immigration, unlike in the rest of Europe. However, the present economic meltdown is on much the same scale as the boom, and the economy is extremely vulnerable at the moment.

There has been a tremendous growth in the youth population.

The Irish sensibility includes one of fairness, and this drives social activism more than the human rights frame, though there is a very strong legislative framework on Equality. Membership of the EU has been important in driving how Ireland is presently imagining itself.

> "One can rely on personal sympathy, but not on a systemic response."

In many areas, policy is well developed: the key issue is implementation and accountability. For example, there are good community development policies, but the reality is poor community organisations.

Community development funding is short term, and does not support the building of strong community organisations. Community organisations are almost entirely dependent on state funding. Alliances become difficult because of the scarcity of resources, and organising becomes fragmented. In this context, another Irish sensibility comes into play: just do what you can with what you have. Coalitions become a challenge because of the hierarchy of rights, and LGBTI rights can in some cases be at the bottom of the list. And it sets up a tension: organisations are advocating to the very institutions that are funding them.

What forms do hate crimes take in Ireland?

Hate crimes are not recorded as such. The general attitude is that a crime is a crime, no matter the motivation.

There are designated liaison officers to the LGBTI community in every police division to deal with crimes based on sexual orientation. The officers have been trained by LGBTI organisations. The quality of this service depends on the individual police station and the individual officer.

Violence against LGBTIs tends to take the form of verbal abuse and assault. Homophobic graffiti is another form. In the rural areas, the problem is less violence than invisibility and alienation.

There is no legislation against violent hate crime although sexual orientation is a protected ground under the Incitement to Hatred Act of 1989. The legislation is geared towards hate speech and covers sexual orientation, but does not cover gender.

Domestic violence between same-sex couples is a growing concern.

Outhouse and community safety

The national police force (the Garda Siochana) has a series of measures in place to provide support to LGBTIs. These include a Garda liaison officer to the LGBTI community in every Garda division. A further measure is a community safety strategy for the Dublin region. This was launched in 2007 at Outhouse by the Minister for Justice and the deputy head of the Garda. A key part of the strategy is a monthly clinic at Outhouse by Garda local liaison officers where LGBTIs can raise any issues they have, in confidence.

How does LGBTI work link to broader community development?

In the early 2000s, there was a government push to fund community organisations through its community development fund. In about 2005, five LGBTI organisations applied. After a year and a half, they received the reply that LGBTIs were not a community and that they should take their issues to the justice department. Now, in 2010, the community development fund no longer exists. LGTBI organisations find themselves in a better position than the community organisations which received community development funding, because they did not become dependent on it. LGBTI organisations' funds come from, for example, the health department, and these are ongoing.

What role does the church play in LGBTI work?

Funding from the Catholic church focuses on social justice, especially on poverty. This has its origins in the missionary mentality. Minorities are seen as a distraction from that work.

What are the HIV infection rates in Ireland?

395 new cases were reported in 2009, from 404 in 2008. 5,637 accumulated infections have been recorded. 41% of these are MSMs. There has been an increase of 42.3% of new cases reported by MSMs in 2009. Young men under 30 account for 35% of all cases. 47% are heterosexuals, and 10% intravenous drug users.

HIV/AIDS is Ireland's largest sexual health problem. It is not an indigenous problem: the majority of infected people are immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa and are infected before they come to Ireland.

Why was 1993 a turning point for Irish LGBTI activism?

There was LGBTI activism in Ireland long before there were funded LGBTI organisations. This history has been lost, but the LGBTI movement in the 1970s and 1980s created the platform for what is possible now. It is a reminder that community organising must precede fighting for rights.

Homosexuality was formally decriminalised in 1993 as the result of a campaign based on the fact that Irish laws prohibiting homosexual activities were in contravention of the European Convention on Human Rights. One of the leaders of the campaign was Mary Robinson, the Irish president from 1990 to 1997.

Where is the opposition to same-sex marriage coming from?

It is largely the older generation which is against same-sex marriage. There is a growing younger generation which supports it, according to polls.

Much of the opposition is based in the church. The church challenges the state's involvement in family matters. Marriage is seen as a religious rather than a civil institution and as the primary unit of society. Most Irish get married in church whether they are observant or not. There is a lack of understanding of the civil and legal aspects of marriage. But the church is in serious crisis and its moral authority is compromised.

Family law in general is outmoded: for example, cohabiting couples have no legal protection, and the rights of their biological children are not being recognised outside of the traditional definition of marriage.

PART 2: **SOUTH AFRICA**

Historical background

The inclusion of sexual orientation rights in South Africa's Constitution was not a foregone conclusion. Firstly, the struggle for LGBTI rights was happening in a very conservative context. Secondly, it was an issue of contention in the African National Congress (ANC), expressed as a conflict between individual rights and group rights. What has become known as the Equality Clause was driven by influential individuals on the basis of the indivisibility of human rights. In the process, no LGBTI movement or sector was built, and there is ongoing contention about LGBTI rights.

South Africa is a constitutional democracy, and the Constitutional Court is the ultimate recourse. Some people have expressed concern about the ongoing robustness of the Court. While major legislative gains have been made, right through to recognition of civil unions, these are not necessarily political gains. The legislative gains have been based on the provisions of the Constitution. South African attitudes to homosexuality tend to be homophobic.

Currently

South Africa is politically volatile and, in human rights terms, there appears to be a backlash of conservatism and traditionalism and the lurking threat of the religious right. The current economic situation affects everyone, and LGBTIs need to be viewed in the context of a government struggling to deliver generally. South Africa is not a failed state, but it is unstable in some areas. Vulnerable groups seem to be increasingly marginalised.

LGBTIs certainly struggle for visibility. Most publicity is about sensational issues such as Pride, hate crimes, violent homophobia in the rest of Africa, and so on.

> "The contribution of The Atlantic Philanthropies to the LGBTI sector in South Africa has been courageous and has made a difference. The strength and survival of the sector and the growth of an LGBTI movement will owe much to that contribution."

Government-appointed human rights watchdogs are generally weak. And while civil society includes human rights social movements, these are also often weak and do not always take up LGBTI issues. However, there are allies for the LGBTI movement in the women's movement and elsewhere.

Some cross-cutting themes in South African society

- Economic divisions and great inequality
- Poverty
- Violence
- Patriarchal society
- The abuse of women
- Hate crimes.

Legislation and politics

Great strides have been made in legislation. Laws have been developed, amended or scrapped on sodomy, human tissue regulation, adoption, partnership benefits, immigration and residency, and same-sex marriage. But this strategic list is often accused of representing middle class concerns. Despite the legislation, government is sometimes seen to take positions that are homophobic.

Foothold in Africa

LGBTI rights have a very shaky foothold in the rest of Africa, which is unashamedly homophobic to an extreme degree, including the state-sanctioned murder of LGBTIs in some places.

The South African government seems to prefer to avoid the issue and certainly does not come out with a strong human rights line. Public statements suggest that South Africa's political leadership is at best confused and at worst homophobic. The issue that homosexuality is unAfrican is constantly being rehashed despite proof to the contrary.

The LGBTI sector in South Africa is trying to reach out into Africa: a number of local organisations have links in various countries.

Hate crimes

In our context, serious hate crimes are mostly but not exclusively, committed against black lesbians. Along a continuum, they start with verbal abuse and grow increasingly violent with young men committing "corrective rape" and murder.

Crimes against LGBTIs are not categorised as hate crimes, so statistics are difficult to come by.

There have been some high profile cases in which victims and their families have had support from the LGBTI sector. This is happening slowly but steadily. In KwaThema, for example, there has been a proactive effort to build a sense of community around the murder of lesbian Eudy Simelane. And the 07-07-07 campaign (against homophobic hate crimes) is sometimes more, sometimes less visible.

What is the 07-07-07 campaign?

The 07-07-07 campaign was initiated by the Joint Working Group and aims to highlight violence against lesbian women. Its name comes from the brutal murders of lesbians Sizakele Sigasa and Salome Massoa in Soweto on the 7th of July 2007. There is a history of hate crimes against lesbians and transgender people, but of 20 known hate crime cases, only 2 have gone to court, and these have been endlessly postponed.

South Africa has signed international treaties obliging it to take a stand and proactive measures against hate crimes. Government does little, but there has been some response from civil society. Hate crimes are a point for alliance-building.

Religion

About 80% of South Africans claim to be religious. They are mostly Christian, but there is a sizeable Muslim population. The fundamentalist "God Squad" is on the rise. There is some support for LGBTI rights in the mainstream religious institutions. There are also churches serving the LGBTI community specifically.

HIV/AIDS and sexual health

There are a number of organisations in the LGBTI sector doing research on HIV/AIDS and adapting their services to it, especially for MSMs. HIV/AIDS is a huge area of concern in South Africa, with women of child-bearing age the most affected. The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) is the main social movement here. Because of the links with sexuality and stigma, the TAC is a natural ally for the LGBTI sector.

Young people

The education system is positive in theory but very uneven in practice. Young university students from various campuses have formed Kaleidoscope, which is closer to a movement than the sector as a whole. But what happens after university? At schools, LGBTI rights need to be mainstreamed and monitored. But even the basics of education are patchily provided in South Africa and education, in general, is struggling to fulfil its mandate. Organisations in the LGBTI sector do their best to help with the coming-out process, but there is no government initiative for young people's mental health.

Community development

Identifying LGBTI issues with broader community issues is happening in pockets. This kind of politics is time-consuming, but it produces leaders. It enables LGBTIs to form alliances with progressive elements in their communities and changes perceptions of LGBTIs. It would be useful for the LGBTI sector to have a strategy for engaging with the current service delivery community protests.

Transgender and intersex people

Many LGBTI organisations do not know what the real issues are for transgender and intersex people. These need to be mainstreamed in the LGBTI sector. There is, however, an active NGO, Gender DynamiX, that addresses the needs of, and advocacy for, transgender people, and ISA (Intersex South Africa) is addressing intersex issues.

Women

There are sector organisations that deal with women's health (physical, emotional, mental and social), but these should be mainstreamed. Patriarchy remains a major obstacle to women's rights generally.

Mainstreaming

Theoretically, South Africa celebrates and protects diversity, which means providing services in a fair and equal way. There are no records of unfair service delivery for the LGBTI sector, because service delivery is generally so poor. There are no second generation rights[4] for most people: all rights are a fight. LGBTI service organisations try to fill the gaps in services, but they have limited power and capacity.

The LGBTI movement

There is presently a reasonably strong LGBTI sector, but it reflects reform, not transformation. Transformation would, inevitably, require that patriarchy be challenged. The question remains: Where does the LGBTI sector fit in with other social movements?

Some future scenarios

In a recent scenario planning exercise for the LGBTI sector in South Africa, the axes of the robustness of the LGBTI sector against the robustness of human rights culture were used to frame the following possible scenarios for LGBTIs in the future. The intention in scenario planning is to conceptualise possible scenarios in order to prevent them from happening or encourage them to happen. Possible scenarios (named using "Gayle", an English/Afrikaans gay argot with some other indigenous languages thrown in) included the following:

Beulah Injabalo (Building something beautiful)

- LGBTI sector flourishes
- Strong human rights culture

- Strong community foundation
- LGBTI organisations working synergistically together
- Mainstreaming taking place
- Constitutional Court strong and progressive in terms of human rights.

Gaynor Zabalaza (Good, but be ready to fight for your rights)

- Active and flourishing LGBTI sector
- Fighting hate crimes and any attempts to amend legislation unfavourably
- Sector unified and co-ordinated, trust one another
- Government increasingly conservative if not homophobic
- Some banning of organisations
- Community foundation doing well
- Alliances forged with other human rights organisations.

Sikuphi Soweto (A lot of uneasiness about where we are and where we are going to)

- Human rights culture, but LGBTI sector disintegrates
- Failure to set up community foundation
- No new activists emerging
- Constitutional framework fragile but there
- Economic crisis has affected donors
- Organisations are closing — those that remain are self-centred, no solidarity
- Losing habit of joint action — JWG breaking up
- JWG marginalised in terms of human rights movement.

Nora Inniekak (Environment hostile to human rights — LGBTI sector disintegrates)

- Homophobic utterances and crimes increase
- Sporadic deaths
- Rhetoric around unAfrican/unIslamic practices increases
- Traditionalism, conservatism, "God Squad" influence increases
- Formal LGBTI organisations cease to exist

- Activists emigrate
- Idea of community foundation folded
- Region increasingly homophobic and South Africa goes along.

Some questions from the Irish

> "South Africa is an inspiration. The achievements of the South African LGBTI movement are a beacon of possibility for Ireland."

Why are the gains for LGBTI rights in South Africa not safe?

The strategy for the organised South African LGBTI sector was to recognise that, though the movement as a whole was weak, the new Constitution provided an opportunity for winning rights. Once the right to equality was in the Constitution, the movement went about making use of the Constitution to challenge oppressive legislation. The strategy was conservative in that the less contentious issues were tackled first. This process also provided the opportunity for alliances. For example, the 1996 Employment Equity Act was an opportunity for bringing HIV/AIDS equity into the law.

But the laws can be changed. If there were to be a referendum it is likely not to be supportive of LGBTI rights. (A recent poll showed that 80% of South Africans are against the notion of people of the same sex having sex.) There is a fracture between formal equality and deep-seated sexism and homophobia in South African society.

Constitutional Court judges are chosen by the president, and there has been some concern that conservative judges would replace the progressive ones which have characterised the court until now, but this does not seem to be happening.

However, the Zuma presidency seems to resonate with groups of traditionalists who are threatened by the increasing social power of women, immigrants, and LGBTIs, including around the right to access employment. The quality of public debates on gender equality has deteriorated, and prominent public people make homophobic and sexist statements with little or no government response. The LGBTI sector is getting more vocal in its criticism of this.

The differing interests in the ANC mean that the party cannot be relied on to protect gender and other progressive rights. Vigilance is required. The 2012 general election will be a turning point: much will depend on how populist a position the ANC adopts. Having won legislative rights, LGBTI activists cannot afford to become complacent.

What is missing in LGBTI activism at present is a plurality of voices. There are great social and economic inequalities in the LGBTI community, and grassroots voices do not get sufficiently heard. In fact, there is no LGBTI movement on the ground. There are, however, increasing pockets of LGBTI activism throughout the country. There are also deep contradictions: for example, some apparently conservative rural communities can be tolerant in surprising ways. The legacy in South Africa is regulated exclusion and inclusion, and LGBTI activists adopted the strategy of reregulating society. But with the politics of inclusion, new forms of exclusion are manifesting, especially around social and economic class.

There is a crisis of identity in general in South Africa. LGBTI activists need to be asking themselves: How do different identities intersect? And how can alliances be built at those intersections?

How did LGBTI parenting rights get established?

After 1994, parenting rights in South Africa were gradually won and established via cases in the Constitutional Court.

Are there specific groups for the LGBTI youth? Is there a need for such groups? What kind of support is there for the LGBTI youth, such as counselling? Do young people come out?

The age of consent in South Africa is 16, but it is illegal to provide LGBTI services to the youth under the age of 18 without parental consent. By then, it is often too late. LGBTI activists do work with other groups around mental and physical health issues for the LGBTI youth, but it is a severe problem that the law around sexuality puts an age limit on offering mental and physical health services.

LGBTI organisations are not working with state departments, such as education or health. The education system is in a state of great flux, and the health system is dysfunctional.

Triangle Project's youth work

Triangle Project has found that the best way to work with the youth is around interests such as sport and the arts. We do use the media, but interest groups are most effective. These need to be based in the areas in which the youth live or they are inaccessible. We focus on the 16 to 25 years age group. We can then provide services on request. The youth do not seem to be interested in politics. They appear disaffected. They want social networking, primarily. Triangle's youth work is independent of Triangle: we just facilitate it.

PART 3: **THE DISCUSSIONS**

Advocacy

The indivisibility of human rights

The Irish concept of a democratic republic is very undeveloped compared to South Africa. It simply means freedom from the British Empire to most Irish people. In 2016, Ireland will be celebrating 100 years of republicanism, but there is little imagination around what republicanism really means. The Irish Constitution itself is framed by Christianity and the Christian notion that society is based on the family, that the family is based on heterosexual marriage, and that marriage is sanctified by God. The economic boom from 1995 to 2007 provided some space for asking questions: What is a republic? What does it mean to be a citizen? But this space had closed in the present economic meltdown.

Irish LGBTI activists are wary of working through the state. Their concern is that the response will be that the state has already done all it needs to for LGBTIs. Irish LGBTI activism needs to ally with other human rights activism and organisations and promote the notion that all citizens are equal.

South Africa and Ireland are different in that South Africa has a rights framework as its starting point, while Ireland builds on the Irish "fairness" sensibility, although there is a legislative equality framework to back this up.

South Africa has worked incrementally to entrench statutory rights, but LGBTI activism needs to get to the grassroots. Human rights obligations need to be diffused from activists into the community at large, and LGBTI activists could be the vanguard of this. How can LGBTI activists take the struggle for LGBTI rights beyond the struggle with the state? How can more proactive work be based in grassroots communities? There is potential for alliances around more general issues that affect poor

> "The concept of special rights can get used against the LGBTI community to entrench difference. It is important to argue for the indivisibility of human rights."

communities, but race and other divisions are still very fraught in South Africa and the LGBTI sector will have to take them into account.

> "Homophobia and xenophobia often go together."

Research data on LGBTI rights is needed to inform strategies for extending the reach of LGBTI activism beyond preaching to the converted. Young people are a target group.

Another problem is that South African LGBTI activists are still reactive: they do not shape the discourse around sexuality and gender diversity. They need to be changing attitudes as well as legislation and policy. Both streams of activism need to be pursued: legal and policy issues with the state, and consciousness issues in communities.

> "LGBTI voices on broader social, political and economic issues are missing. Or are they perhaps there, but not heard?"

Ongoing struggles

> "We need to balance pragmatism and idealism. For example, civil unions might be replicating hetero norms and compromising the broad goal of fighting patriarchy, but they are a victory for equality."

Some rights in South Africa that have not yet been won include: getting South Africa to act on its human rights commitments; the protection of intersex children from gender reassignment surgery at birth; and making gender reassignment surgery available through the public health service. In addition, the

marriage legislation has an opt-out clause, meaning that should a marriage officer object to marrying a same-sex couple he or she is not obliged to do so. Similarly, there are deficits in the employment equity legislation that allow religious beliefs to override what is constitutional. South Africa has not yet got to grips with what it means to be a secular society rather than a religious or traditionalist one.

Workplace Equality

In recent surveys, Irish LGBTIs identified equality in the workplace as being the single most important equality issue affecting them. Despite progress generally on LGBTI equality in Ireland, a majority of those surveyed were not generally out in the workplace. There are very few out role models in senior management in any sector. GLEN's approach to workplace equality centres on economic competitiveness and business cases for promoting LGBTI equality in the economy and the workplace. GLEN works with a range of employers, such as Microsoft, IBM, the national police force and trade unions, to build their capacity to support LGBTI employees and to meet their legislative requirements. Earlier this year, the deputy prime minister launched the GLEN *Workplace Diversity* guide for employers and trade unions.

Marriage

While South Africa has won civil unions legislation, transgender people cannot benefit from it. The Alteration of Sex Status and Sex Description Act (known as Act 4) requires people to be single if they want to change their gender. So married transgender people need to get divorced. Also, people cannot change their gender identity without having had genital surgery. This legislation needs to be challenged and changed.

In Ireland, the civil partnership bill may have unintended negative consequences for poorer couples. For example, a lesbian couple was previously seen as two single individuals and each person could thus receive any state or employment benefits due to her.

Under the new law, they are obliged to declare themselves as cohabiting: if one partner is unemployed her state benefit would decline because she is now seen to be a partner in a couple. Lesbians are particularly vulnerable, because they are more likely to be lone parents and more likely to be poor.

"Out to your TD" Campaign

A key part of Marriage Equality's campaign is to encourage LGBTIs to go to their local TDs (members of the Irish parliament) to ask them directly for access to civil marriage. Helping TDs to understand that this is an issue for people living in their own constituencies is very important. Marriage Equality has produced a range of supportive background and briefing materials for the "Out to your TD" campaign, and encourages LGBTIs to get their family and friends to contact their TDs also. "By getting local people to tell their stories about how they want civil marriage rights for their father, mother, brother, sister or friend we can make TDs see that this issue must be resolved".

Family

In Ireland, there is no recognition of LGBTI families. Single individuals can adopt children, but otherwise, non-biological parents have no rights over their children. The differences between gay men and lesbians in this sphere can create tensions. For example, the rights of a sperm donor father are stronger than the rights of the non-biological partner of the child's mother.

LGBTI refugees

LGBTI activists in the rest of Africa see South Africa as a haven, but LGBTI organisations are not equipped to deal with LGBTI refugees. Recently, six Ugandan activists fled to South Africa, and there was nothing in place to provide them with the help and support they needed. Gender Dynamix was also recently faced with a Zimbawean refugee who needed food, clothing and shelter. The organisation has identified the need for funding for such emergencies.

"Corrective rape"

In South Africa, "corrective rape" is seen by the authorities as domestic violence, not as a political issue. But LGBTI organisations are engaging with civil society organisations, such as women's organisations. The violence with which differences are expressed in South Africa is extreme. LGBTI organisations can work to change this through champions and working with individuals.

Monitoring

In Ireland, statutory bodies established to protect and promote equality and human rights, such as the Equality Authority and Human Rights Commission, lack independence. In South Africa, there is concern that the Equality Court lacks teeth. Where does the money for these institutions go? Sweden had an ombudsman for LGBTI issues. Once equality legislation is in place, this sort of monitoring is required.

Mainstreaming, normalising and coalition-building

> "What about a social movement for human rights? We need to be disrupting the status quo. How can we transform our communities so that everyone is valued?"

Human rights work happens in silos at present. This compartmentalisation of different human rights struggles has the effect of pushing them into the margins.

In South Africa, LGBTI organisations work on issues beyond the LGBTI community, because there are such huge, pressing needs, such as for housing. By doing community work, LGBTI activists get to know the community. Another strategy South African LGBTI activists use is less formal: they make sure that there are LGBTIs at community meetings to respond from the LGBTI perspective to the issues being dealt with.

Uniting the broader community around LGBTI rights in KwaThema, South Africa

There has been an interesting response to hate crimes against lesbians in the township of KwaThema. There, under the auspices of strong and well-organised ANC structures, the broader community has come out in support of LGBTIs in KwaThema and surrounds. This support extends to immigrants and HIV-positive people, among others. Its basis is the indivisibility of human rights, rather than the special rights of a particular group that is vulnerable to hate crimes.

There was a strong LGBTI community in KwaThema in the 1980s. This community was not necessarily political, but people were out and organised. The broader community tolerated LGBTIs.

In 2007, the Lesbian and Gay Equality Project did some research in the township, asking the question: What has changed since constitutional rights have been won? They found a shattered community, dependent on government grants.

When Eudy Simelane was murdered, it united the entire community. Advocacy and activism around the case mobilised the community around violence against women and lesbians.

> "The LGBTI struggle must be located in the broader struggle."

LGBTIs' needs are part of a range of needs of different vulnerable groups. LGBTI organisations can broaden their scope and breadth without changing their mission or focus. They can be supportive and present to other civil society organisations.

In South Africa, activism around gender-related violence and HIV/AIDS includes many lesbians in prominent roles, but they are not explicit about their identity. Generally, when LGBTI social

activists take on other struggles, they don't identify themselves as LGBTIs.

Alliances and coalitions between LGBTI organisations

There is no agreement between Irish LGBTI organisations on the strategy for LGBTI activism. Different organisations have different priorities, and these need to be negotiated and balanced. In alliances, the power dynamics that drive the choice of priorities when the agenda for activism is set need to be explicit and interrogated. Whose voices get heard in LGBTI organisations? For example, often transgender voices do not get heard. There is homophobia in the transgender community and transphobia in the LGB community.

> "How can activists and organisations build trust and co-operation? How can we develop the habit of collaboration?"

In South Africa, it has been a struggle to get transgender mainstreamed into other sectors as well as into the LGBTI sector. The T and the I were always in LGBTI, but in name only. It became clear to transgender and intersex activists that there was extremely limited understanding, if any at all, of transgender issues in the LGBTI sector.

The LGBTI movement is very diverse and lacks internal coherence. Ideological fissures and differences, including within LGBTI organisations themselves, need to be surfaced. In the South African JWG, organisations were apparently united around the issues of marriage and hate crimes, but there were ideological differences that should perhaps have been surfaced at the start. Sometimes activists decide to circumvent these differences in the interests of an immediate gain. Nevertheless, LGBTI activists need to understand where other activists and organisations are really coming from. There is often an official ideological line, and a different unofficial one. There are also differences in strategy between LGBTI organisations. And there have been tensions around leadership.

Activists need to be clear about the specific purpose of a coalition and the values that underpin it, and they need to interrogate how the focus of the coalition gets chosen. Who is the coalition representing and who takes the lead in the coalition? What are the power dynamics? Who represents which constituency? Liberation means different things to different people, and a coalition's strategy must come out of understanding those differences.

A difficulty is that organisations do not engage with each other and then expect to work together on a campaign or in a coalition. In addition, LGBTI activists can be precious and territorial, including staking claims over particular communities.

Coalitions have value in presenting a united front on a particular issue, but there is no need for a united front on all issues. Different organisations need to retain their specific interests and character, as well as take advantage of a collective space. Organisations could do one joint piece of advocacy work every year, for example, in addition to their own work.

The South African JWG is made up of 28 organisations and is well established. Sometimes the organisations support each other, and sometimes there is friction between them — over whom the JWG represents for example. Member organisations of the JWG also provide each other with significant informal support on specific issues.

National LGBTI helpline

The National LGBTI Helpline Project in Ireland is an initial three-year project to establish a national helpline number run by a network of independent local LGBTI helplines. The operation of the national service is being realised through the collective efforts of the seven existing helplines — Cork Lesbian Line, Dublin Lesbian Line, Dundalk Outcomers Helpline, Gay Information Cork, Gay Switchboard Dublin, Limerick Gay and Lesbian Helpline and Outwest Helpline. The service will be launched in autumn 2010. The project website provides information on the helpline service as well as links to a wide range of LGBTI and mainstream support services. The project is funded by the Community Foundation for Ireland.

Alliances and coalitions between LGBTI organisations and other human rights struggles

Hate crimes provide a possible opportunity for coalitions beyond the LGBTI sector, since they affect several minority groups (women and migrants for example). The first stage of such work could be on hate crimes in general, and a second stage could profile how hate crimes affect a specific group.

> "In the extreme violence of South Africa, hate crimes legislation would have great symbolic value, if not much impact on the ground."

Bilateral alliances seem to work in Ireland, not broader alliances, and also if the alliances have one clear goal or aim.

Other civil society organisations in Ireland are weak and often dominated by a religious social justice perspective. How can LGBTI activists mobilise people in similar struggles to their own? Who are their natural allies and how can they build skills in those groups? For example, lesbians' and bisexuals' issues can be mainstreamed into women's groups. However, in Ireland an

LGBTI organisation worked with Rape Crisis to highlight that all women are vulnerable to rape, but there was no quid pro quo from Rape Crisis to highlight lesbians' and bisexuals' issues.

> "Sometimes organisations pay lip-service to LGBTI issues just to be politically correct."

In Ireland, LGBTIs in other organisations, such as in professional associations of doctors, could become LGBTI activists within those professions themselves. Similarly, while international trade unions have LGBTI policies, there are limited resources for doing the necessary work. Skills need to be built to create special interest groups within such organisations. The role of LGBTI activism in relation to these organisations needs to be motivational rather than directive. And a community base needs to be built, not just leadership and activists.

> "Funders want bang for their buck, but social change takes time."

In Ireland, advocacy and service delivery both get the attention of the LGBTI movement. Because Irish LGBTI organisations have been the recipients of state funding, they have been able to respond to the needs of their constituencies rather than to the agenda of a funder. Irish partnerships with government agencies are vulnerable to economic conditions. The partnerships may begin with good motives, but ultimately they depend on the availability of money.

> "How do we keep broader issues such as economic rights alive? In the present economic context, interest in issues such as poverty is waning."

There is a clear and present danger in the changing political and economic context in South Africa. LGBTI groups need to make common cause with other groups in a similar position. This requires hard, strategic thinking.

Caucuses are needed in the big political institutions like the ANC and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). However, LGBTI issues are usually not even a consideration for these institutions and they do not necessarily see any common cause. People within these institutions should initiate caucuses or coalitions, not the LGBTI organisations, and some are trying to get LGBTI issues on the agenda of their organisations. Individuals in the institutions should be encouraged. Otherwise, it is seen as outsiders pushing an issue that is marginal to the institution — an imposition of the queer agenda.

> "We need to change the limited images of LGBTIs, the clichés and the stereotypes. LGBTI people are ordinary people too."

Homophobia needs to be clearly understood: it may come from the history of homosexuality as a sin/crime/illness, but it is also due to stringent gender- policing. LGBTI activists need to understand the complexities of the status of LGBTIs in their societies. And internalised homophobia remains a problem.

Perceptions of the LGBTI sector from the outside include that LGBTIs have got everything they need, in fact that they have special rights, and that they have no interest in issues beyond their own. Another obstructive perception is that LGBTI issues are only to do with sex.

> "We need to be doing a lot more communications work, such as campaigns around individuals coming out, or building a community peace park."

There also needs to be more LGBTI representation in the arts and in the entertainment media, such as cinema.

Concluding with some questions

- What have been the successful and less successful coalitions and why?
- What are the barriers to forming coalitions?
- How can LGBTI struggles come out of their silo?
- What are the broader issues the LGBTI community can support?
- Where does an organisation put its efforts if its resources are limited: into coalitions or into meeting its own mandate?
- Might coalitions around practical issues work better than broader coalitions?

Sustainability and enduring capacity

The Atlantic Philanthropies South Africa's perspective

There is a general contraction of funding for human rights, exacerbated by the recession. AP is withdrawing in 2016 and is trying to unlock additional resources for the LGBTI sector in three main ways:

- AP is planning to set up a community foundation for the LGBTI sector, which will be built on additional international funding, individual giving, and LGBTI businesses (LGBTI-owned or selling to the LGBTI community). AP hopes to raise R50 million as seed funding, with the aim of building an endowment.
- AP has used a strategy for its rural grantees that may be effective for the LGBTI sector. AP works with Inyathelo, a pioneering sustainability development organisation, to provide a four-year programme to develop sustainability skills in rural NGOs. AP's grantees competed for the five available places in this programme on the basis of their proposals.

- AP is examining the blockages to funding from the National Development Agency and the National Lotteries, also with Inyathelo. In parallel, LGBTI organisations should be advocating for this funding, which is substantial.

The Atlantic Philanthropies Ireland's perspective

AP is also exiting Ireland and as part of its strategy is supporting work to build and secure the longer term capacity of the LGBTI community including growing statutory, public and private funding streams which will prove challenging in the current economic environment. LGBT Diversity, the three year national capacity building programme, funded by AP, includes the provision of funds to research and set up a community foundation and develop a more diverse funding base for the LGBTI sector. The use of match funding is one tactic being used to attract other funders. This work forms part of and links to AP's support to develop an enduring capacity to protect human rights. It also links to the development of philanthropy in Ireland in which AP is actively involved.

Some questions:

- How do organisations access a variety of local funding?
- Where is the community funding?
- What does enduring capacity mean?
- What is required of established enduring capacity into the future?
- What are the contextual conditions required to protect rights, given established enduring capacity?
- What are the various components of enduring capacity?
- There are statutory components: it is not only a civil society capacity. How do organisations make the best use of the statutory components?

Individual giving

There is little history of private philanthropy in Ireland: the focus of giving is ad hoc, with a focus on charity. Most LGBTI fundraising is events-based and the money tends to go to men's sexual

health. Lesbians tend not to benefit from it. But there seems to be potential for individual giving. In South Africa, people tend to give to the church.

How can LGBTI organisations engage rich LGBTI individuals? Proactive campaigns are one option. The market needs to be segmented and properly understood. Legacy projects, such as bequest programmes, need to be explored. This is uncharted terrain, and will not deliver immediately.

The role of for-profit organisations also needs to be explored. There are business opportunities in the LGBTI sector, but LGBTI businesses tend to extract wealth without building the LGBTI community. How can LGBTI-based businesses be contracted into community development? Civil society organisations might be another source of funding for LGBTI organisations.

Out In Africa, South Africa's LGBTI film festival, has mobilised commercial funding and employed some self sustainability strategies

Commercial funding and in-kind support form a small but important part of Out In Africa's sustainability. In addition, the festival makes a profit for the cinemas and for itself. The festival's membership campaign brings in very little funding and the administration is demanding, but this is a long-term strategy and Out In Africa believes it will bear long-term fruit.

Volunteers

Volunteers are useful for building organisational capacity and for building the LGBTI constituency. LGBTI organisations need to use volunteers and interns more, and draw on knowledge from other human rights organisations. (In South Africa, transport costs are an issue for many volunteers.) Key LGBTI individuals need to be identified and more people need to be drawn in, not only for financial giving but also other forms of contribution.

The state

> "We need to be providing real services that people want to pay for."

Others need to be encouraged to take up the work that LGBTI organisations do, including the state. The state needs to play its role, from policy through to service delivery. LGBTI organisations can complement the state's role and functions.

In South Africa, state funding for LGBTI organisations is very limited at present. LGBTI activists need to show the state and state agencies that it is more cost-effective to fund LGBTI organisations now, than to deal with the consequences of not addressing issues such as LGBTI health later. There is an economic case for diversity. How can LGBTI activists sell this idea?

In Ireland, the work of the LGBTI movement dovetails with the work of the state. Having been funded by the state, are Irish LGBTI organisations then subsidising the state's institutions?

LGBTI organisations need equal partnerships with state agencies. They should establish expertise in state agencies, then hand over to the agencies and play a monitoring role.

Fundraising expertise

> "The funding needed to sustain an organisation is significant, so we need to build the capacity to raise these funds."

Fundraising requires professional skills, including understanding the sources of funding and shaping messages to those sources. Generally, LGBTI organisations do not have these skills.

However when LGBTI organisations do have adequate funding, they tend to become complacent. Another issue is that it becomes difficult to criticise one's funder.

Might coalitions be a way to mobilise for funding? Might

collaborative funding proposals work? But there is mistrust and competition within the LGBTI community around accessing funding.

Closing note

> "Sustainability is not just about sustaining our organisations, it is also about sustaining ourselves as activists. There is a tendency to burn out."

Community development and cohesion

> "We are less a community than a sector."

Irish LGBTI activists understand the word "community" to mean the LGBTI community, while South Africans use it to mean something significantly broader.

South Africa LGBTI activists see the need to ask themselves what defines them as an LGBTI community and to examine how they choose to organise: the structure of their organisations, the alliances they build, and the strategies they choose.

> "We need to ask ourselves who we are representing."

- Visibility: Who is seen?
- Resources: Who gets them?
- Voice: Who gets heard?

> "The hierarchy that puts advocacy organisations above service delivery organisations needs to be challenged."

There are tensions in broader society that shape how LGBTI activists see themselves and the work they do. The imposed discourse around the gender binary and sex identity tends not to be challenged. And race, ethnicity and economic status are also social forces in the LGBTI sector.

The LGBTI community seems more integrated than in the past, but it is still fragmented. For example, in the past the South Africa the leadership was middle class white men, and in Ireland mostly from urban settings. How to include rural settings and increase black lesbian participation and leadership are key challenges if the community is really to grow stronger. In South Africa, there has already been a big improvement.

There are varying needs in the LGBTI community around different definitions of sexuality, race and class gender: How do activists and organisations address them all? And there are tensions between elements in the sector. The common cause is human rights in relation to sexual identity. The JWGs are an example of working together on this common cause.

Pride is an example of apparent community cohesion, but there are similar tensions. Pride also provides an opportunity for heterosexual people to participate in LGBTI advocacy work.

Individuals often engage in LGBTI activism for a short time or erratically. Spaces for ongoing discussions are important for retaining activists.

The unspoken

Activists need to open up discussions about what does not get talked about within the LGBTI community, such as domestic violence, transgender issues, older LGBTIs, and children. A research agenda would be useful for this.

> "It is not just the heterosexual community that is prejudiced against the LGBTI community."

Prejudice and discrimination within the LGBTI community needs to be acknowledged and tackled, for example in relation to disabled people or particular gender identities.

The youth

Developing the next generation of leaders is an important element of sustainability. In Ireland and South Africa, this is happening through university students. Are university campuses a useful space for accessing the youth? LGBTI organisations have an obligation to support youth organisations to foster leadership. In Ireland, this is happening.

> "The notion that young people are not interested in activism is not true in Ireland or South Africa."

Organisations need to ask themselves why they are excluding the youth, rather than why the youth are not approaching them. Understanding the youth and their issues is needed. Assumptions must be interrogated. How might organisations adapt to include not only the youth but also other groups, such as transgender people. There is no value in inviting in these groups unless organisations are willing to change to accommodate them and their issues.

BeLonGTo: Stand Up!

BeLonGTo launched a new advocacy campaign in April 2010 — Stand Up! LGBT Awareness Week. Stand Up! Week provides an annual focus for promoting positive awareness of LGBTI young people, tackling homophobia and homophobic bullying, and building allies among young people and youth workers. During Stand Up! Week, youth workers offer all young people who participate in their centre the opportunity to participate in fun and educational activities. These increase awareness, build supportive links among young people and reduce the incidence of bullying and name-calling. BelonGTo produced activity packs and ran training workshops.

Beyond the local

Does an LGBTI community exist beyond the local? Would a local coalition take a position on a regional issue? An international issue? Activists' sense is that there is no LGBTI community beyond the local. Would a broader LGBTI community be useful or not?

Rural areas

LGBTI activism and community work happens mainly in the cities in both Ireland and South Africa. In the rural areas, people may have different interests. How can activists bring these together? How can strategies be adapted for rural areas?

Out In Africa, the South African LGBTI film festival, has different types of film festivals in the cities and the rural areas. In the rural areas, the festivals are a much needed social event and *Out In Africa* responds to this need by providing a social space

Services

> "LGBTI specific community services will always be needed, no matter how entrenched rights are and how favourable public opinion may be."

Services are a right

In both Ireland and South Africa, the state co-opts the language of citizenship to promote the notion that an individual must be a deserving citizen to access state services rather than that those services are a right.

Mainstreaming LGBTI services

Appropriate LGBTI services need to be included in mainstream services rather than provided as special LGBTI services. If there are special LGBTI services, they need to be more specifically targeted, for example for lesbians, transmen and transwomen, and the youth.

> "Part of mainstreaming is to hold the state accountable for providing services to the LGBTI community."

Working with the state

There are similarities between Ireland and South Africa in that LGBTI organisations offer alternative services to those offered by the state. There is some state funding for these alternative services, hence LGBTI organisations can be seen to be fulfilling the state's obligations.

There are pockets of willingness in the state to provide services, generally through an individual and his or her influence. But there are also blockages. For example, state social workers tend to "dump" their LGBTI clients on LGBTI organisations. The state's resistance to providing LGBTI services is often due to a lack of awareness about LGBTI issues. This is also often at the individual level. Individual education and training may be helpful, but LGBTI activists need to engage at the system level, since individuals come and go.

> "The state should be outsourcing service provision to LGBTI organisations."

At the moment, LGBTI activists and organisations need both to provide alternative services and to ensure that the state takes up its responsibilities. There needs to be clarity about what each should be providing. For example, the state cannot provide social networking, which is often a need for LGBTIs.

> "LGBTI organisations should have as their agenda to hold the state accountable for delivering services beyond narrow LGBTI interests."

Better-quality state services are needed for everyone. LGBTI organisations can provide models for meeting the services needs of the broader community. In Ireland, LGBTI service organisations can provide models to the state and form partnerships with elements of the state. South African organisations can write up and disseminate their models.

LGBTI service provision should be a basis for LGBTI advocacy.

> "We have ascribed a lot of power to the state. Now we are banging our heads against the wall of the state's failure and resistance."

Some LGBTI activists and organisations ask themselves why they want to work with the state at all. But civil society organisations can never meet all the needs of all citizens.

Advocacy vs service delivery

The JWG in South Africa is concerned about how to tackle service delivery issues. Individual organisations within the JWG do take service delivery issues on (for example, OUT - Tshwane deals with mental and sexual health), but it is not a collective strategy.

Deciding which services to take responsibility for

Resources are limited, and LGBTI organisations need to decide which services *not* to provide and who *not* to provide them to. Allies must be drawn on and champions found for particular causes.

> "Should LGBTI service organisations be providing basic services like food, clothing and shelter?"

In South Africa, providing the most basic of services is often necessary. In Ireland, LGBTI service organisations can take the basics for granted. This is a significant difference between the two countries.

Barriers to access to services in South Africa

> "Poverty makes access to many services in South Africa almost impossible."

Lack of transport and communications are some of the barriers to accessing services, and poor people are often preoccupied with meeting the most basic of their domestic needs rather than accessing services like healthcare. And in any case, the state's services infrastructure does not deliver adequately or equitably. Other barriers include the male-dominated culture, which increases women's, and therefore lesbians', difficulties with accessing services, and inappropriate responses from service providers when someone discloses that they are LGBTI.

Class and gender weave through all LGBTI work. Poorer people may perceive LGBTI services as only being for the middle classes and only meeting middle class needs. Middle class people may be hesitant to publicly access services.

Entrenching LGBTI service provision

Activists need to ensure that LGBTI service issues are raised at policy level through lobbying and through educating and training individuals in key positions. However, while explicitly including LGBTI issues in policy is essential to accessing services, it is no guarantee.

Irish LGBTI organisations use the 4 Ps approach to entrench service provision (see page 61).

The education system

A good place to start with providing LGBTI services is via the education system, building on existing relationships with individuals in that system. Ireland and South Africa are similar regarding homophobia in the education system. Schools are heterosexist environments and LGBTI components in the curriculum are optional, so students may not get any insights into LGBTIs or their history. Homophobic bullying in schools is not being addressed.

GLEN's schools work

GLEN's schools work aims to effect policy change so that schools are safe, supportive and inclusive places for LGBTIs. GLEN has worked with the Department of Education to produce Guidance for Principals and School Leaders on creating such environments. Critical to the success of this initiative was the relationship with the Department of Education, which now sees the Guidance as a positive and proactive step in meeting its responsibilities. A second critical factor was the engagement of all the education partners (school management bodies, including church management bodies, the National Parents Association, teachers unions and professional associations for school principals) who were part of the development and dissemination of, and endorsed, the Guidance.

The healthcare system

A cultural shift in the healthcare system is needed. Professional healthcare and other bodies, such as the unions and regulatory bodies, need to be included to contribute to this cultural shift. Such a shift might happen more easily in Ireland because the scale of the healthcare system is so much smaller.

Some specific gaps

In South Africa, men who have sex with men can access free condoms but not lubricants, and there is no access to femidoms. In South Africa, there is a general lack of education on safer sex and barrier methods.

In Ireland, lesbian health services are neglected. There is a lack of knowledge among service providers about what lesbians need.

International solidarity

> "The abuse of human rights is international."

The African context

African governments are becoming increasingly homophobic, which compromises the work of LGBTI activists in South Africa. The failure of most governments in Africa to deliver effectively on social and economic needs, including the South African government, is a concrete determining condition, exacerbated by dire economic conditions. The most vulnerable groups are open to attack, and the state deflects social pressure via these groups.

While South African LGBTI organisations are working in the rest of Africa, this is often underground. Their position as organisations, generally, is that if they were to be attacked they would withdraw from the rest of the continent and limit their focus to South Africa.

> "How can LGBTI organisations working underground in Africa be supported?"

South African LGBTI activism is based in an LGBTI rights framework. Other African countries need to use a human rights framework, rather than an overtly LGBTI one. Organisations and individuals can be in danger if they are outed as LGBTI rights-based. There is a need for human rights defenders with the capacity to get people out of dangerous situations.

Asylum and refugee systems in Ireland are not adequate. What is the responsibility of Irish LGBTI organisations for LGBTI refugees?

North-South power dynamics

> "Solidarity does not mean leadership from the North. This compromises the notion of African homosexuality."

In post-colonial Africa, social and political systems are part of a global system. North-South differences, alliances and power dynamics need always to be taken into account: between LGBTI

organisations from the North and from the South, and between Northern funders and their Southern grantees.

What does solidarity mean in this context?

- Solidarity must not be paternalistic: it must happen in dialogue.
- The North needs to be careful of taking over an agenda or subsuming dialogue between South organisations.
- International partners can cause damage if they do not understand the local context.
- Solidarity is best built over time and through *doing* (programmatically). This facilitates better communication and a better understanding of power relations.

Structures like the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) are useful forums for advocacy. LGBTI activists from the North can push solidarity issues in those structures.

The **International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission** is US-based and has its African office in Cape Town. It is part of solidarity work with Africa. It collaborates with organisations in other countries and with other international human rights organisations.

> "South Africa itself tends to behave like the North in relation to other Southern LGBTI organisations."

International solidarity includes both North-South solidarity and South Africa's solidarity with the rest of Africa.

South African LGBTI organisations have not explored what international solidarity means. Why is there a need for solidarity? How does an organisation express solidarity? Statements? Petitions? What are the organisational ethics and values that might drive international solidarity?

Lessons from the EU and the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA)

There are many differences between the 47 European countries. LGBTI rights are not all resolved and established across this region, for example in Eastern Europe. The 10 new member states were forced into accepting LGBTI rights in order to join the EU. Two years down the line, there is a homophobic reaction on the ground, for example attacks on Pride marches. The sub-regions of Europe have different histories and this shapes how LGBTI activism can happen. For example, in central Europe LGBTI solidarity with the trade unions is not viewed favourably. Many European countries do not have hate crimes legislation or data, unless the crime is based on race.

Europe has many continent-level bodies and networks which facilitate alliances, for example between LGBTI organisations and trade unions. Mechanisms like these are very facilitative.

ILGA Europe maintains solidarity by abstracting the issues up so that they can contain the differences between countries. ILGA sets a common vision and mission across all of ILGA. All ILGA's sections base themselves on this. This buy-in to a vision and mission gives legitimacy to the sections, though there are limits, for example transgender, women's and ethnicity issues are excluded. ILGA structures need to be modified to include the diversity of identifications.

> "The method for making decisions in ILGA is talking. This can take years, but it facilitates careful, embedded decision-making."

The grassroots

> "Who has the voice in international LGBTI activism? Who speaks on behalf of whom?"

LGBTI organisations, North and South, underestimate grassroots capacity to organise. The very presence of grassroots organisations is testimony to their resistance, their organisation, and their resilience. If capacity is lacking, capability is not. People at the grassroots have a political understanding of LGBTI issues. Established LGBTI organisations in South Africa and in the North want to help, but should actually be brave enough to stand back and allow the growth of local organising. LGBTI organisations should be asking people on the ground what they want in terms of solidarity.

> "Sometimes we need to protect our constituencies from solidarity: they can get exploited for political gain."

The **Coalition of African Lesbians** has engaged with its member organisations in Uganda. When civil society organisations, donors, and international organisations got involved, the grassroots LGBTI voices diminished, and resources also moved away from the grassroots. LGBTI solidarity groups should be following the lead of LGBTI grassroots organisations, not taking the lead. International organisations compete with each other to help local organisations.

> "We need to counter the perception that LGBTI activism comes from the US and Europe. African voices are essential. Support from the North is forthcoming and valued, but needs to stay in the background."

Sustainable solidarity

At present, solidarity happens around a crisis. There is no carefully considered, explicitly articulated strategy. LGBTI organisations need a strategy for solidarity as a process, not as an event. The North should not just be reactive. Analysis is needed to forge a proactive agenda, including how to respond to crises.

> "We talk to each other about work, we share ideas and participate in the same agendas, but we do not actually do any work together."

LGBTI activists need to work together on specific projects, sub-regionally and internationally — and not necessarily exclusively LGBTI projects. Solidarity is needed with other causes and organisations too.

> "What are the logistics of working together for solidarity?"

Relationships between organisations, not between individuals, need to be built and sustained. Individuals influence organisational solidarity, which then becomes vulnerable when relationships between individuals change.

There must be a desire to work together; it cannot be imposed. Activists need to ask themselves what the purpose is of each particular need for solidarity.

LGBTI organisations may have a common experience of being under siege, but each experience is particular, as is each organisation. Do organisations planning to work together have the same vision of social change? What, for example, are their views on abortion, sex work and the parental rights of the sperm donor?

> "We need to be aware that we might be terrified of discovering that we have very little in common though our struggle appears to be the same."

Solidarity between organisations within a country

LGBTI organisations within South Africa and within Ireland have not explored solidarity between their own organisations. Can this solidarity be assumed? LGBTI organisations within a country need to interrogate and negotiate what their solidarity is based on.

Religion

The church is extremely powerful in Ireland. The Catholic ethos still has significant impact, particularly in education and healthcare. There is a strong social justice movement in the churches in Ireland, but there is pressure from the right for churches to take conservative positions. In addition, both Christian and Muslim religious groups, influenced by US evangelists, espouse and provide reparative therapy for LGBTIs. Similarly, homophobia in Africa can be seen to be driven by US right-wing Christian evangelism.

In South Africa, in general the churches have become more conservative, in the same way that African governments are conservative. Progressive church influence is being displaced by that of evangelical churches.

> "Organised religion is at the heart of LGBTI oppression and needs to be deconstructed."

Working on the margins of institutionalised religion has a limited effect. But how can one deconstruct an institution that provides hope and comfort to millions of desperate people? In Africa, the devastation of HIV/AIDS has led many people to US-based fundamentalist churches for guidance, support and solace.

The church has the effect of deflecting awareness and criticism of the state's failures.

An engagement needs to come from groups within the churches. There are groups and pockets of LGBTI-rights supporters within many churches. They need capacity-building and support. There are also smaller churches and breakaway churches from the large institutional churches.

> "LGBTI activism can exploit the sentiment of compassion inherent in Christianity."

LGBTI organisations need to appropriate Christian values for a progressive rights agenda.

The visibility of LGBTI families is very important for challenging religious homophobia.

HIV/AIDS

The International Network of Religious Leaders (INERELA+) is an interfaith group of religious leaders with HIV/AIDS, many of whom are LGBTI. HIV/AIDS is a useful entry point for LGBTI work, but can also lead to the stigmatisation of HIV/AIDS as an LGBTI issue.

PART 4: **CONCLUSION**

What the South Africans learnt from the Irish

The 4 Ps is an interesting approach for South African LGBTI organisations to consider as a way of working with the state.

The 4 Ps model

The 4 Ps model is a strategic framework for achieving a service that is inclusive of LGBTIs. It was developed in Canada in the 1990s and has been adopted by GLEN as a framework for mainstreaming LGBTI issues in Ireland. It has four interlinked components, which are key building blocks for creating services and organisations that are accessible and appropriate for LGBTIs. While all four elements would ideally proceed in parallel, it is useful to think of them in the following order when planning and implementing changes.

1. **Public profile** refers to the message that the service communicates publicly about LGBTIs.

Consider the following questions:

- What message is communicated to prospective users of the service who are LGBTI? How would an LGBTI person know that the service is LGBTI-friendly and that it is safe to disclose their identity?
- Does the service website and literature include appropriate reference to LGBTIs?
- What is the profile of the needs of LGBTIs within the service and how is this profile communicated to the public?

It is vital for services to profile publicly that they are an LGBTI-friendly service. This profile will let prospective LGBTI service users know that they are welcome and will be provided with the same high quality service as others.

> "It's good as South Africans to realise that South Africa is not the centre of the world. There is another world out there. Both the similarities and the differences between South Africa and Ireland are interesting and useful to examine."

This can be achieved by:

- publicly indicating on the service website that the service is non-discriminatory and values and respects the diversity of people using the service (naming sexual orientation and gender identity as examples of diversity)
- displaying a poster and literature in the service
- advertising in the gay press
- developing liaisons with local LGBTI services.

2. **Policy and procedures** refers to the service's policies on equality and diversity and other policies relevant to LGBTIs, and its procedures to provide appropriate services to LGBTIs.

Consider the following questions:

- Does the service have an equality and diversity policy and if so does it make explicit reference to LGBTIs?
- Does the service have procedures that recognise and provide appropriate services to LGBTIs (e.g. recognition of same-sex partners, next of kin)?
- Is there a clear procedure for dealing with homophobic and transphobic behaviour, comments or attitudes at all levels of the service?
- How is this policy communicated to staff and volunteers and implemented throughout the service?
- How is this policy communicated to service users?

It is good practice to have a written equality and diversity policy, and this policy should outline the grounds on which discrimination is illegal, including sexual orientation and gender identity. Such a policy will clearly communicate the service's commitment to promoting equality and respecting diversity to staff and service users.

3. **Programmes** refers to specific work being carried out by the service to address the needs of LGBTIs and include them in the service.

Consider the following questions:

- What is the service doing to ensure that it is accessible and appropriate to the needs of LGBTIs?
- Is there a need for the service to specifically target LGBTIs? If so, what is the most appropriate way to do this?
- Does the service include LGBTIs in consultations on the design, delivery and evaluation of services or products?

Many services have already developed successful programmes to make their service LGBTI-inclusive. LGBTI organisations that are willing and able can support services in such programme development. Services can advertise or communicate with the LGBTI community.

4. **Professional development** refers to specific work being carried out by the service to support staff and volunteers to be LGBTI-inclusive in their work.

Consider the following questions:

- What has the service done to ensure staff and volunteers provide the service in a non-discriminatory manner and are compliant with equality legislation?
- Have resources been developed to support staff and volunteers to be LGBTI-friendly and to cater to the specific needs of LGBTIs?

Examples of such professional development are:

- good practice guides for the service or sector
- LGBTI-inclusive practice training for staff and volunteers

including LGBTI issues in in-services, as part of activities, and in seminars and conferences.

For more information contact odhran@glen.ie

The South Africans gained some insight into their own JWG via the Irish JWG. The South African JWG is doing good work, but does not necessarily have to be a sustainable machine:

All LGBTI organisations seem to want to create a space for the youth. The South Africans can learn from what the Irish are doing.

What the Irish learnt from the South Africans

For the Irish, there was value in learning about the poverty in South Africa and about transgender and intersex issues. Despite South Africa's progressive legislation, there is extreme poverty and violence. This was an eye-opener.

The Irish learnt a lot about strategies for their marriage campaign from the South Africans.

The retreat was also an unusual opportunity for Irish activists to share with and learn from one another. There has been some discussion about setting up LGBTI activists' peer support meetings, which would include looking at a joint sustainability strategy.

> "For us Irish, it has been a wonderful opportunity for cross-learning among ourselves. A lesson for us is to take time like this together more often."

Shared issues

> "There are more similarities than we expected in our way of working and the issues we are working with. But we gave each other new and different points of reference."

- Solidarity is a process that happens over time based on actually doing work together.

- LGBTI organisations are not a homogenous group. There are different organisations with different styles and different needs within the LGBTI movement. How does the movement deal with that? And who gets represented by the movement? Deliberate work is needed to increase representation.
- Sustainability is an issue.
- There need to be better links between advocacy and service organisations.
- Coalitions need to be targeted and have clear objectives; they should not just set up for the sake of having a coalition.
- There is a lack of fundraising expertise. How can LGBTI activists access this expertise?
- There are links between community development and human rights activism as mechanisms for social change, but people and organisations in these two modes often don't engage with each other though they share goals.
- Leadership and continuity are a problem. This is often buried in the discussion on the youth. There are very few activists with the necessary voice, passion and skills. Can the youth be expected to be activists?

Looking ahead

A follow up meeting may be useful, with a discussed, clear agenda. Meanwhile, the two groups should keep in contact with one another. Relationships have been established, and activists can pursue ideas together. Perhaps a blog for an ongoing exchange between the groups could be established. Sharing ideas is part of building sustainability.

The report from the conference may have value beyond AP. It could go on websites to share with other LGBTI and human rights organisations.

Specific issues for ongoing conversations

- Solidarity, including with actors beyond the LGBTI sector
- A community foundation as part of a sustainability strategy
- The need for hate crime legislation.

Some suggestions for further engagements with each other

- Established organisations could send their publications to emerging organisations.
- A group of South African marriage activists could advise the Irish, for example on legal processes.
- There could be an exchange of youth activists between the countries.
- The Irish can highlight what they have learnt about South Africa and Africa in their own organisations, but must include activists from South Africa and Africa themselves in this.
- Sharing evaluations might have value.
- Each learnt about models the other is using. At a future session, there should be concrete presentations of models.

> "Let's remember our successes in the face of overwhelming present needs."

FOOTNOTES

[1] On the 19th of July 2010 the President of Ireland signed the Civil Partnership Bill into Irish law. The Bill will extend many of the rights and obligations of civil marriage to same-sex couples including home protections, pensions, taxation, maintenance, next of kin, social welfare, domestic violence, inheritance, enduring power of attorney and creation of joint tenancies. Minister for Justice and Law Reform Dermot Ahern who tabled and progressed the legislation stated "This most one of the most important pieces of civil rights legislation to be enacted since independence". The Bill was supported by all parties in both houses of the Oireachtas (Irish parliament), and has advanced following almost a decade of campaigning by LGB groups for civil marriage. The view of all parties in the Oireachtas was that marriage would require constitutional amendment. However, many speakers in the debates in both the Dáil and Seanad expressed support for civil marriage in the future. The critical omission in the Bill is the lack of recognition of children being parented by same-sex couples. However, very many members of parliament across all parties raised this issue and there was general agreement that this need to be addressed urgently and that there were opportunities emerging to do this is the near future.

[2] There is currently a Constitutional challenge to have a Canadian same-sex marriage recognised by the Irish State. Katherine Zappone and Anne Louise Gilligan are appealing the rejection of their case by the High Court on constitutional grounds to the Supreme Court. That case is expected to be heard in late 2010/early 2011. A Civil Partnership Bill is currently going through Parliament

[3] T is used here as an inclusive, umbrella term for people of different identities and presentations.

[4] Civil and political rights are referred to as first generation rights. Second generation rights are economic, social and cultural.

THE PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR ORGANISATIONS

From Ireland

Bernadine Quinn, co-ordinator, Dundalk Outcomers

Bernadine is a 45-year-old lesbian woman from the small town of Dundalk. She was one of the group of people who started the support group which became Dundalk Outcomers. She has been a volunteer and the centre manager.

bernadine@outcomers.org

Dundalk Outcomers is a social and support group which has been providing services to the north-east of Ireland for 14 years. These include a drop-in centre, social events, information, and one-to-one support.

http://www.outcomers.org

Brian Sheehan, director, Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN)

Brian has been involved in the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN) for a number of years, and has a long history of engagement with LGB issues, including as director of the Dublin lesbian and gay film festival, the Gay Switchboard Dublin, and the National Lesbian and Gay Federation (NLGF), publishers of the main Irish gay magazine Gay Community News.

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GLEN is an advocacy organisation seeking equality for LGB people in Ireland. GLEN concentrates on legislative reform, workplace equality, equality in statutory service provision, and community capacity development. Formed as a voluntary organisation in 1998, GLEN now has a full-time team of seven people.

GLEN focuses on principled and pragmatic engagements with government, politicians, and national strategy, policy and representative bodies. GLEN also does research.

http://www.glen.ie

Cat McIlroy, co-ordinator, Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)

Cat recently stepped down as Transgender Equality Network Ireland's (TENI) co-ordinator, having been involved as both committee member and chair. S/he holds a master's degree in equality studies, which focused on transgender issues. Cat also authored TENI's report on transphobia in Ireland.

director@teni.ie

TENI is a non-profit organisation supporting the diverse transgender community in Ireland. TENI raises awareness about gender diversity through support, education and advocacy. The network is member-based, comprised of transgender people and their families, friends and allies.

http://www.teni.ie

Derek McConnell, programme manager, LGBT Diversity

Derek has 12 years experience working to promote positive social change with a range of organisations, including Dublin AIDS Alliance, Merchants Quay Ireland, UNAIDS and a range of community development organisations. He holds a degree in psychotherapy and a master's degree in gender, sexuality and human rights law.

derek@lgbtdiversity.com

LGBT Diversity has an LGBT strand and a transgender strand. The programme aims to build capacity, develop support groups and networks, strengthen the LGBT sector, expand TENI's reach, and engage in gender recognition policy. Other work will include research, conferences, and exploring the need for an umbrella body for LGBT organisations.

http://www.lgbtdiversity.com

George Robotham, chair, Outhouse

George has been actively involved in the LGBT community in Ireland since 1988, including volunteering for and serving on the boards of the Gay Switchboard Dublin, GLEN and the NLGF, and most recently Outhouse. He has worked for the last 30 years as a civil servant, the last 8 as a social welfare facilitator.

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Outhouse is an LGBT community centre in Dublin. On average, about 100 people use Outhouse daily. Its core activities are ensuring the provision of information, social, cultural and health services for LGBT people. Outhouse also engages with other human rights issues where policy positions are required.

http://www.outhouse.ie

Michael Barron, director, BeLonGTo

Michael co-founded BeLonGTo and was its first employee in 2003. Before that, he worked with young migrants and homeless people for a number of years. He holds a master's degree in youth and community studies. He publishes on youth issues and participates in policy-making.

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BeLonGTo is a national youth service for young LGBT people in Ireland. It provides direct services, works with government and national bodies, provides a drugs education and outreach service, supports the development of LGBT youth groups nationally, delivers training to education and youth workers, does youth advocacy work, and provides detailed information for young people.

http://www.belongto.org

Moninne Griffiths, director, Marriage Equality

Moninne oversees the legal, political, mobilisation and communications strategies of Marriage Equality. Before moving to the not-for-profit sector she was a practising solicitor for 10 years. She holds a master's degree in women's studies.

moninne@marriagequality.ie

Marriage Equality is a not-for-profit national grassroots organisation working for equality for the LGBTI community through the extension of civil marriage to same-sex couples.

http://www.marriagequality.ie

Odhrán Allen, director of mental health policy, GLEN

Odhrán has been the director of mental health policy at GLEN since 2006. He is a qualified occupational therapist with many years of experience in mental health practice. He has also worked strategically at the national level. Odhrán's work for GLEN includes capacity-building with a range of health agencies, and engagements with LGBT groups.

odhran@glen.ie

Patricia Prendiville, independent chair, Joint Working Group for Building Sustainable LGBT Communities Programme

Patricia has over 20 years' experience in community development, social change advocacy, and organisational development facilitation. She was executive director of ILGA Europe from 2004 to 2009. In 2009, she established her consultancy, Equality Works. She has degrees in psychology, women's studies and organisational development.

patricia.prendiville@gmail.com

Toddy Hogan, project co-ordinator, L.inC (Lesbians in Cork)

Toddy is an experienced community development and education resource worker. Her focus is on equality of opportunity and outcome, and training and education.

info@linc.ie

L.inC's main focus is to provide a safe accessible resource space for the lesbian and bisexual community and their families in Cork city and county, and to support the community to develop individual and group networks using a peer support model.

http://www.linc.ie

Vanessa Buswell, co-ordinator, Rainbow Support Services

Vanessa has been doing community work since 1989, including with the LGBT community, women, Irish travellers, young people, and on sexual health. She started as Rainbow's co-ordinator in 2007 and has developed it to offer a wide range of services.

rainbowlmk@eircom.net

Rainbow Support Services is a voluntary organisation in the mid-west region. It traces its history back to 1986 with the founding of the Gay Switchboard Limerick. Rainbow provides a range of services to LGBT people and their families and friends, including a drop-in centre, a youth group, a women's group, a transgender support and social group, and a helpline.

http://www.rainbowsupportservices.org

From South Africa

Anthony Manion, director, Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA)

Anthony has been involved in developing a number of exhibitions and co-edited some of GALA's books.

anthony.manion@wits.ac.za

GALA was established in 1997, a year after the adoption of South Africa's new Constitution. GALA mobilises memory by documenting and popularising the lives and histories of LGBTI South Africans. In so doing it contributes to pride, challenges homophobia and entrenches the rights and history of LGBTIs. GALA uses exhibitions, films, books, comics and other mediums to educate the public on the importance of respecting difference, thus contributing to the development of human rights-based democracy in South Africa.

http://www.gala.co.za/

Fikile Vilakazi, director, Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL) secretariat

Fikile holds an honours degree in development studies. She has been involved in development work since 1993, and in gender, feminism and women's rights activism, and LGBTI activism in South Africa, Africa and Europe. She has passion for grassroots development and believes in participatory development.

director@cal.org.za

Founded in 2003, **CAL** is a network of organisations committed to African lesbian equality and visibility. CAL's work is shaped by an African radical feminist understanding, informed by research, and strengthened by the claiming of social and economic power. CAL is the first NGO in Africa to work on the equality of lesbian women at a continental level.

http://www.cal.org.za

Janet Shapiro, consultant, Nell and Shapiro

Janet is an organisational development consultant working out of Johannesburg. She and her partner, Marian Nell, have done extensive work for AP and have written a number of publications on the LGBTI sector. They are also the cluster evaluators for the LGBTI sector in South Africa.

nellshap@hixnet.co.za

Liesl Theron, director, Gender Dynamix

Liesl is the founder of Gender Dynamix, a human rights organisation for transgender, transsexual and gender non-conforming people. She is active in the organised LGBTI sector of South Africa. She received the Sexuality Leadership Development Fellowship in 2007. She publishes, and is working towards an honours degree.

liesl@genderdynamix.org.za

Gender DynamiX is the first African-based organisation solely focussing on the transgender community, including significant others, family, friends and allies (SOFFAs). The aim of Gender

DynamiX is to create awareness and visualise transgenderism. It provides help, advice and information for those who seek to adjust their lives to live in the opposite gender role to that assigned to them at birth, or who are working to come to terms with their genetic background.

http://www.genderdynamix.co.za

Mazibuko Jara, chairperson of the board of the Lesbian and Gay Equality Project

Mazibuko has worked professionally and as an activist in diverse areas with NGOs, political organisations, co-operatives and community-based organisations since 1996. Since 2000, his area of specialisation has been co-operatives and alternative economic transformation. From 2000 to 2006, he was the chief spokesperson and strategist for the South African Communist Party. He is the current chairperson of the board of the Lesbian and Gay Equality Project, and was previously the national manager and project co-ordinator of the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE).

mazibuko@amandla.org.za

The Equality Project is a non-profit NGO that works towards achieving full legal and social equality for lesbian and gay people in South Africa within a framework that acknowledges and responds to broader social and economic inequalities. The Equality Project works through three programmes: movement- and strategy-building, policy and research, and access to justice.

http://www.equality.org.za

Melanie Judge, programme manager, Inyathelo

Melanie holds a master's degree in development studies and an honours degree in psychology. She is a feminist and human rights activist, and has worked in HIV/AIDS, gender and sexual rights in South Africa and Africa. She has worked extensively in lobbying and advocacy for LGBTI rights. She publishes frequently in journals and the popular media.

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Nodi Murphy, director, *Out In Africa*

Nodi is an exhibitionist in all senses of the word. The fifth of five children, she has developed techniques that ensure she is heard. Her apparently confident, outgoing personality is fuelled by self-doubt (a consequence of an Irish Roman Catholic upbringing) and shyness (four planets in her natal chart fall in Scorpio, the much maligned star). She co-founded Out In Africa, and has been its director for all its 17 years.

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The ***Out In Africa*** South African Gay and Lesbian Film Festival was launched in 1994, and set out to address the lack of positive LGBTI visibility and to provide a platform for discussion and debate about LGBTIs in the newly-founded democracy. The festival showcases films from around the world, and promotes a homegrown film industry. It assists in the creation of communities and the strengthening of related organisations. Through its high public profile, Out In Africa garners tremendous coverage in the mainstream media.

http://www.oia.co.za

Phumzile Mtetwa, director, Lesbian and Gay Equality Project

Phumi became part of township youth activism against apartheid in the 1980s, including LGBTI activism. She co-founded the NCGLE, which campaigned for constitutional and legal reform for equality for LGBTIs. She was co-secretary general of ILGA from 1999 to 2001. She spent 2000 to 2007 in Ecuador, active in Latin American social movements. She co-ordinates the international LGBTI South-South Dialogue. She is the director of the Equality Project, the historical continuation of the NCGLE.

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Vanessa Ludwig, director, Triangle Project

Vanessa is a committed Africanist feminist, dedicated to achieving equality not only in theory but also in practice. For the last seven years, she worked at the Gender Equity Unit at the University of the Western Cape, and is presently the director of Triangle Project.

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Triangle Project has its roots in GASA 6010, an organisation formed in 1981 by a group of gay men. GASA 6010's counselling, medical and telephone helpline services still exist, and it was one of the first organisations in South Africa to respond to the HIV/AIDS crisis. In 1996, Triangle Project got its new name to better reflect the multifaceted services it offered to the LGBTI community. Today, Triangle Project is the largest LGBTI organisation in South Africa.

http://www.triangle.org.za/

Sue Valentine, facilitator

Sue is a media consultant, trainer, and print and radio journalist. Over the past 20 years, she has worked in the mainstream South African media, as well as in the NGO sector. In 1995, she started South Africa's first gay and lesbian radio programme, run entirely by volunteers.

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Karen Martin, rapporteur

Karen has been a free-lance editor and writer in the development sector for the last 15 years. She was the archivist at GALA and has served on GALA's board for many years. She has produced a number of publications for GALA and is presently leading GALA's queer African fiction project. She is an emerging writer of short fiction.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

"Corrective rape" – a practice whereby heterosexual men deliberately target lesbians, believing that sex with a man (rape) will "cure" them of their lesbianism

Gender identity – our psychological and social sense of who we are as male or female

Hate crime – when specific groups are targets of crimes involving physical and mental abuse, like rape, assault and verbal abuse (defamation)

Intersex – people born with full or partial genitalia of both sexes, or with underdeveloped or ambiguous genitalia, or with unusual hormones or chemical combinations. The existence of intersex people challenges the idea that there are only two biological sexes.

Mainstream – to treat as part of everyday life. For example, mainstreaming LGBTI issues, we ensure they are dealt with as part of all policies, laws, procedures and service delivery.

MSMs – men who have sex with men, but who do not necessarily identify as gay. This is a population that is hard to reach, for example in campaigns to promote safer sex, because of their lack of visibility.

Transgender – people who are biologically male or female but identify emotionally as the opposite sex and express their personalities as the opposite of their biological gender

Transphobia – an irrational fear of, hatred against and disgust towards transgendered people